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-- ABSTRACT

Traffic information is accumulated and flow control information distributed in a packet switching system. Traffic information is collected in multiple elements, which forward to collecting elements indications of congestion and other types of information useful in determining traffic conditions. The collecting elements manipulate the received indications and generate flow control messages which are sent to individual sending components of the packet switching system. In one implementation, a switching element maintains for each destination a count of packets within itself which are addressed to the particular destination. Indications of this collected information is sent to all, or a subset of, the collecting switching elements of the packet switching system. These collecting elements accumulate the information received from multiple sources. The accumulated information is evaluated, and when a congestion condition is located or anticipated, then flow control messages are distributed to all, or a subset of, the packet sources. --